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SUBJECT: USAID/EGYPT LAUNCHES EXPANDED DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORTING CONTRACTING INSTRUMENTS

1. SUMMARY: IN MARCH AND APRIL 2006, USAID/EGYPT SIGNED THREE MAJOR INDEFINITE QUANTITY CONTRACTS (IQCS) TO STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE IN EGYPT. THESE IQCS WILL PROVIDE A TIMELY AND COST-EFFECTIVE MECHANISM TO IMPLEMENT USAID'S DG STRATEGY IN THE AREAS OF MEDIA, DECENTRALIZATION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE. THE IQC MECHANISM ALSO WILL ACCOMMODATE FUTURE PROGRAMMATIC AREAS THAT USAID/EGYPT IS PLANNING IN THE AREAS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND ANTI-CORRUPTION. IMPORTANTLY, THESE IQCS ALSO WILL BE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT DEMOCRACY FOR OTHER USAID MISSIONS AND USG AGENCIES IN THE BROADER MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGION. END SUMMARY.

2. 2005 WAS A BANNER YEAR FOR USAID/EGYPT'S DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO. THE PORTFOLIO HAS GROWN FROM ONE BILATERAL ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE PROGRAM IN THE SPRING OF 2005 TO FIVE BILATERAL PROGRAMS IN SUCH DIVERSE AREAS AS FAMILY JUSTICE, CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DECENTRALIZATION AND MEDIA STRENGTHENING. ADDITIONALLY, THE DG OFFICE IS FUNDING MORE THAN A DOZEN GRANTS TO EGYPTIAN AND INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE 25-YEAR HISTORY OF THE US-EGYPT BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, THESE GRANTS HAVE BEEN ISSUED AS DIRECT GRANTS TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS. THE DG PORTFOLIO, CURRENTLY AT \$240 MILLION, IS GROWING. ANNUAL PROGRAMMING FOR FY 2006 IS EXPECTED TO BE \$48 MILLION, MORE THAN DOUBLE THE FY 2005 BUDGET OF \$22 MILLION.

3. TO HELP EGYPT MOVE CLOSER TO FREE AND FAIR PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN 2005, USAID'S DG OFFICE PROVIDED FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO THREE MAJOR COALITIONS OF OVER 15,000 EGYPTIAN DOMESTIC MONITORS, FIELDDED TWO INTERNATIONAL ASSESSMENT TEAMS ORGANIZED BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE AND THE INTERNATIONAL REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE, TRAINED JOURNALISTS ON CITIZEN-BASED ELECTION REPORTING, ENABLED A NETWORK OF NGOS TO CARRYOUT A VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN AND ORGANIZED FOUR CIVIC DIALOGUES ON ELECTIONS ISSUES. ALTHOUGH INTERNATIONAL ELECTION MONITORS WERE NOT FORMALLY ACCREDITED, THE USAID-SUPPORTED CIVIL SOCIETY COALITIONS WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN SUCCESSFULLY PRESSURING THE GOE TO ALLOW DOMESTIC MONITORS INSIDE THE VOTING BOOTHS. THESE EFFORTS WERE REINFORCED BY GRANTS THAT RAISED AWARENESS ABOUT PARTICIPATING IN THE ELECTION AND CIVIC DUTIES, FOCUSING PARTICULARLY ON STUDENTS, YOUTH, THE DISABLED, AND DISADVANTAGED AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS SUCH AS COPTS AND BEDOUINS. USAID WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THESE AND OTHER REFORM-ORIENTED GROUPS IN PREPARATION FOR LOCAL ELECTIONS IN 2008.

4. IN THE MEANTIME, USAID HAS DEVELOPED INITIATIVES DEVOTED TO ADDRESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF TARGETED EGYPTIAN GOVERNING INSTITUTIONS. PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN DESIGNED AND PROCURED TO PROMOTE FAMILY JUSTICE; MORE EFFECTIVE AND TRANSPARENT ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE; DECENTRALIZATION AND PARTICIPATORY LOCAL GOVERNANCE; AND PROFESSIONALIZATION OF JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA REFORM. WHILE USAID/EGYPT PROCURED FAMILY JUSTICE USING A USAID/WASHINGTON RULE OF LAW IQC, USAID/EGYPT IQC'S WERE INITIATED FOR THE THREE OTHER ACTIVITIES. THESE IQC'S REDUCED PROGRAM MANAGEMENT COSTS COMPARED TO THE WASHINGTON-BASED IQC, ALLOWING GREATER FUNDING FOR PROGRAM ACTIVITIES. USAID MISSIONS AND OTHER USG ENTITIES OPERATING IN THE MIDDLE EAST OR EVEN ASIA MAY USE THESE IQCS TO REDUCE THEIR COSTS FOR DEMOCRACY PROGRAMMING.

5. USAID'S NEW BILATERAL PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

FAMILY JUSTICE: USAID/EGYPT WILL WORK WITH THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW FAMILY COURT LAW. FIRST, THE PROGRAM WILL STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF THE FAMILY JUSTICE SYSTEM TO MEDIATE FAMILY DISPUTES BY DEVELOPING, ASSESSING AND IMPLEMENTING TRAINING IN PILOT COURTS IN THREE GOVERNORATES. SECOND, IT WILL INCREASE ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON FAMILY LEGAL SERVICES BY ESTABLISHING INFORMATION OFFICES WITHIN THE FAMILY COURTS, BUILDING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE MINISTRY AND THE MEDIA TO PROVIDE ACCURATE INFORMATION ON THE NEW LAW,

AND ENGAGING NGOS TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS ON LEGAL RIGHTS AND AVAILABLE LEGAL SERVICES FOR FAMILIES. FINALLY, THE PROGRAM WILL ESTABLISH A MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM TO MONITOR BOTH IMPLEMENTATION OF MEDIATION SERVICES AND MEDIATION RESULTS, ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF THE MINISTRY TO COLLECT DATA AND IDENTIFY LESSONS LEARNED DURING IMPLEMENTATION.

16. ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE: IN TANDEM WITH ITS ON-GOING SUPPORT OF THE JUSTICE SECTOR, EFFORTS IN THIS AREA WILL PROVIDE MORE EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE OF COUNSEL TO CRIMINAL DEFENDANTS AND IMPROVE THE ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE. THE APPROACH WILL INVOLVE WORKING WITH THE OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL (PGO) IN CAIRO TO: DEVELOP A PUBLIC DEFENSE SYSTEM, ACHIEVE CONSENSUS AMONG KEY MINISTRY OF JUSTICE OFFICIALS, PREPARE AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND INITIATE IMPLEMENTATION; DEVELOP CURRICULA THAT ENGAGES PROSECUTORS AND JUDGES IN APPLYING HUMAN RIGHTS CONCEPTS TO DUE PROCESS PRACTICES IN EGYPT; AND AUTOMATE SELECTED AREAS OF THE PGO TO IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF THE PGO AND INCREASE ACCESS TO THE CASE FILE BY DEFENSE COUNSEL.

17. DEMOCRATIC LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DECENTRALIZATION: USAID WILL IMPROVE THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO RESPOND TO CITIZEN PRIORITIES BY INCREASING REVENUE, ESTABLISHING PARTICIPATORY MECHANISMS TO MANAGE RESOURCES, AND STRENGTHENING MANAGEMENT. SUPPORT FOCUSES IN SIX GOVERNORATES (SOON TO BE SELECTED) WHERE USAID HAS INVESTED IN EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND THE ENVIRONMENT. POLICY DIALOGUE AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL WITH THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IS HELPING TO SHAPE THE LONG-TERM DECENTRALIZATION REFORM AGENDA TO DECENTRALIZE KEY FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES TO THE LOCAL LEVEL.

18. PROFESSIONAL MEDIA DEVELOPMENT: USAID WILL HELP THE EGYPTIAN MEDIA SECTOR BECOME MORE PROFESSIONAL, ECONOMICALLY VIABLE, AND INDEPENDENT THROUGH BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF EGYPTIAN INSTITUTIONS THAT TRAIN JOURNALISTS, IMPROVING THE MANAGEMENT OF MEDIA, AND DEVELOPING LOCAL MEDIA. USAID WILL ALSO HELP THE GOE IMPLEMENT A MEDIA REFORM AGENDA. WHILE THE PROJECT IS JUST STARTING, USAID ANTICIPATES PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS WITH KEY CAIRO-BASED INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS: EL AHRAH REGIONAL PRESS INSTITUTE; AL AKHBAR TRAINING CENTER; EGYPTIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION UNION TRAINING CENTER; THE FACULTY OF MASS COMMUNICATION AT CAIRO UNIVERSITY; AND THE STATE INFORMATION SERVICE.

19. THREE PROGRAMS (DEMOCRATIC LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DECENTRALIZATION, PROFESSIONAL MEDIA DEVELOPMENT, AND ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE) WERE PROCURED AS FIRST TASK ORDERS UNDER LARGER AND BROADER INDEFINITE QUANTITY CONTRACTS. WINNERS OF THE TASK ORDERS WERE RESPECTIVELY PADCO, MSI AND CHEMONICS. ENTITLED THE REGIONAL DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE IQC'S, ONE FOCUSES ON CIVIL SOCIETY, ONE FOCUSES ON GOVERNANCE AND ONE FOCUSES ON RULE OF LAW.

110. THE CIVIL SOCIETY IQC, WHICH COVERS CIVIL SOCIETY, MEDIA AND CIVIC-BASED ANTI-CORRUPTION WORK, WAS AWARDED TO MSI, AED AND CHEMONICS. THE GOVERNANCE IQC, WHICH COVERS LOCAL GOVERNANCE, LEGISLATIVE STRENGTHENING AND PUBLIC SECTOR ANTI-CORRUPTION WORK, WAS AWARDED TO PADCO, CHEMONICS, ARD AND RTI. THE JUSTICE IQC, WHICH COVERS JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND JUSTICE-BASED ANTI-CORRUPTION WORK, WAS AWARDED TO CHEMONICS, DPK, AND THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS.

111. THESE IQCS ARE ACCESSIBLE TO OTHER MISSIONS OR USG AGENCIES IN THE BROADER MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGION INTERESTED IN SIMILAR DG PROGRAMS. NEGOTIATED FOR ISSUING EITHER COST PLUS FIXED FEE OR FIXED PRICE TASK ORDERS AND STRESSING MID-EAST SPECIFIC EXPERTISE, THESE MECHANISMS CAN HANDLE UP TO \$500 MILLION IN DEMOCRACY ACTIVITIES ON A QUICK TURN-AROUND BASIS. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT JAYNE CARBONE USAID/EGYPT CONTRACTING OFFICER, JCARBONE@USAID.GOV. JONES